



# Fisheries & aquaculture

European  
development cooperation  
State of play 2015



International  
Cooperation and  
Development





↑ *Colombo fish market.*

Photo: EC Library

← *COVERPHOTO*

*Fishermen on the beach  
in Senegal.*

Photo: EC Library

# Foreword

Fisheries and aquaculture can contribute to food and nutrition security and economic growth in developing countries. Our role is to ensure their long term sustainable development - from an environmental, economic and social point of view.

This overview of the European development cooperation's support to fisheries and aquaculture focuses on the priorities of the European Union (EU), demonstrating its level of commitment at global, continental, regional and country level.

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# Why are fisheries and aquaculture important for the EU development policy?

Currently, there are still 870 million people who do not have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food, particularly among the most vulnerable in fragile countries. Hunger and undernutrition affect not just the individual; they also impose a serious economic burden on communities and the sustainable development of countries as a whole. Food and nutrition security are therefore a key priority of EU development cooperation. The EU is the world's largest donor on food security with an average of over €1.4 billion allocated every year for food and nutrition security, sustainable agriculture and fisheries.

Fisheries and aquaculture can play an essential role in fighting under-nutrition and poor nutrition as fish contributes directly to the diet of populations in developing countries. Fish is a source of protein - it accounts for about 17% of the global population's intake of animal protein. In West Africa, Asian coastal countries and many small island states, the proportion of total dietary protein from fish can reach 60% or more. But fish is more than just a source of animal protein. Fish also contains micronutrients and fatty acids that are essential for the diet of vulnerable parts of populations such as children and pregnant women. Fish can contribute to the EU objective to reduce the number of stunted children by 7 million by 2025.

Fish is also a crucial source of revenue for populations in coastal and rural areas in developing countries. According to the FAO, fisheries and aquaculture support the livelihoods of some 660 to 880 million people, or 12% of the world's population. About 56 million people are directly engaged in the fisheries sector. In

addition, many people are employed in important secondary sectors, such as handling, processing and distribution, where women represent half of those involved. Small scale fisheries represent 90% of people engaged in in the fisheries sector and 50% of the fish destined to human consumption.



Finally, sustainable fisheries and aquaculture can contribute to economic growth in developing countries. Fisheries represent one of the most traded food commodities, with a share of about 40% of total fishery and aquaculture production entering international trade and a yearly export value of more than USD 130 billion. Trade of fish and fishery products provides an important source of income for many countries, particularly developing countries.

*Fish market on the coast, Senegal.*  
Photo: F. Lefebvre

# Global challenges and priorities

The global human population is expected to exceed 9 billion by 2050. According to the World Bank, world demand for fish will be around 152 million tonnes (Mt) in 2030<sup>1</sup>. Considering that 80% of all fish stocks are fully or over-exploited, global landings of fish are likely to be stable in the short and medium term. Aquaculture will play an increasing role in feeding the planet, representing 60% of fish destined for direct human consumption in 2030. While projection models seem to agree that the overall fish consumption rate could be maintained, there is a high risk that the imbalance between consumers in developed and developing will deteriorate further due to an increase of fish prices. While the present figures indicate the lowest fish consumption per capita in Africa at 9.1 kg in 2009, it could decrease by a further 10% by 2024 if no appropriate measures are taken.

In this context of increased demand for fish, and as highlighted by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) High Level Panel of Experts<sup>2</sup>, sustainable management of fisheries and aquaculture will be a *sine qua non* condition for food security and nutrition. Fish stocks are common goods that should be properly managed so that they can produce the maximum sustainable yield (MSY). In a number of regions, fisheries governance is weak and there is a lack of data to develop management measures based on sound scientific advice. Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported fishing (IUU fishing) is a severe threat to sustainability. It is estimated that 11-25 Mt of fish is caught via IUU fishing<sup>3</sup> each year, representing between USD 10 billion to USD 23 billion per year<sup>4</sup>. Aquaculture development also comes with a range of challenges and externalities that need to be properly addressed.

Half of the world's population lives within 60 km of the sea, and three-quarters of all large cities are located on the coast. This phenomenon is likely to accelerate in the future, putting pressure on coastal ecosystems. Activities at sea, such as oil drilling, sea bed mining and energy installation, also have significant impacts on aquatic productivity, on habitats that sustain resources and on the livelihoods of fishing communities.

Climate change is an additional challenge that will impact the distribution of species, increase ocean acidification, affect habitat but will also impact livelihoods, for example, by the relocation of communities due to the rise of sea level and multiplication of extreme events.

In 2014, the CFS called for increased political awareness on fisheries and aquaculture and asked policy makers to 'give fish the position it deserves in food security and nutrition strategies, policies and programmes.' In its report of the 41<sup>st</sup> session, the CFS adopted a series of recommendations to maintain and enhance the contribution of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture to nutrition and food security<sup>5</sup>. Among others, the following priorities are mentioned:

- Address overcapacity and overfishing, in line with the Rio+20 outcome document 'The future we want';
- Take appropriate actions to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing;
- Support initiatives to minimize fish discards, post-harvest losses and waste at all steps of the fish value chain;
- Promote the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Alleviation;
- Address the challenges of aquaculture development with due consideration to improved feed efficiency and disease control;
- Facilitate domestic and regional fish trade;
- Improve safety at sea, promote decent work, eliminate forced and child labour and develop social protection in the fisheries and aquaculture sector;
- Promote gender equality and women's empowerment in fisheries and aquaculture;
- Promote the participation of fishing communities and fish workers in all decisions that impact their livelihoods;
- Strengthen international cooperation to build the capacity of developing countries.





*Fishermen in Zanzibar.* Photo: G. Barton

## Developing marine protected areas and ecosystem management approach to fisheries in the Manu River Region, with special focus on Sierra Leone and Liberia

The Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) works with fishing communities in Sierra Leone and Liberia to document pirate fishing by foreign industrial vessels, as part of a five-year project funded by the EU. In Sierra Leone, EJF's community surveillance boat responds to calls from fishers who witness illegal fishing or have their fishing equipment destroyed by industrial trawlers operating illegally in areas reserved by law for local fishermen. The evidence is sent to national governments and European Commission authorities to ensure that the vessels are sanctioned and that their catch cannot be exported to the world's largest seafood market, the EU.

This €788 000 project has proved that empowering communities to document and report pirate fishing can have ground-breaking results. Evidence gathered by fishermen in Sierra Leone and Liberia has been used to sanction offending vessels over USD 1 million, force countries to improve the monitoring of their distant-water fishing fleets and seize consignments of illegal fish in Europe.

**Partners** EJF and local communities

**Duration** 2011-2015

## Improving the capacity of Caribbean fisherfolk to participate in governance

This €1.2 million programme aims at improving regional food security by strengthening fisherfolk organisations and helping them participate in decision-making about small scale fisheries management and governance at a local, national and regional level.

The project spans a number of Caribbean countries, including Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and Turks and Caicos Islands.

**Partners** Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies of the University of the West Indies, Panos Caribbean, Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations and the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism.

**Duration** 2013-2017

# EU programmes: current state of play

The EU has a long tradition of cooperation in the fisheries sector. In 2000, the European Commission adopted a *Communication* on 'Fisheries and poverty reduction'<sup>6</sup> that set up guidelines for EU interventions at global, regional and national levels.

Since 2007, the EU development policy has financed more than 50 projects in the field of fisheries and aquaculture. Commitments over the period 2007–2014 have reached some €230 million. In addition to this commitment, there are other initiatives which also have an impact on fisheries with a primary focus on trade, sanitary and phyto-sanitary (SPS) issues, climate change and protection of the marine environment.

Projects are focused on three main fields of intervention: aquaculture, marine capture fisheries and inland capture fisheries. It is difficult to differentiate the precise amount allocated to each field of intervention due to the fact that a quarter of the projects cover more than one field of intervention. However, the large majority of projects include marine capture fisheries.

## Global and continental level

During the period 2007–2014, 5 programmes have been implemented at global or continental level with a total allocation of some €67 million. These programmes have been designed as umbrella initiatives to support and complement regional and local interventions.

The **Strengthening Institutional Capacity to Enhance Governance of the Fisheries Sector in Africa (FISH-GOV) Programme** aims to enhance the contribution of the fishery sector to food security and economic growth in Africa through an improved institutional and policy environment. With a budget of some €11 million, FISH-GOV will support the implementation of the African Union's *Policy framework and reform strategy for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa*. This project is implemented by the AU Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) in cooperation with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Among other things, FISH-GOV will contribute to raising

awareness on fisheries and aquaculture issues in Africa, improving cooperation between regional fisheries bodies and regional economic communities, and fostering synergies between development programmes and initiatives.

The **ACP FISH II** programme supported the implementation of 184 projects in 79 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries.<sup>7</sup> Launched as a second phase after ACP FISH I, this €30 million programme started in 2007 and finished in 2014. ACP FISH II included support to the review of legal frameworks, the preparation of fisheries management plans, capacity building for national fisheries administration and regional fisheries bodies, and private sector initiatives.

The EU also supports global initiatives such as the **Voluntary Guidelines for Responsible Governance of tenure of Land, Forestry and Fisheries**, through the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and specific initiatives in developing countries.

In the framework of its support to CGIAR, the EU has supported several research projects implemented by the **WorldFish Centre** to improve the nutritional status of poor populations through better management of aquatic agricultural systems and increase aquaculture production and consumption of nutrient-dense small fish.

## Regional programmes

A large proportion of the EU fisheries programmes are regional programmes, amounting to a total of €73 million. This is justified by the fact that many problems linked to fisheries are transboundary ones that need to be addressed at regional level. Regional programmes aim at improving the management of shared stocks, through data collection, scientific advice, the development of management plans, and support to regional fisheries bodies. Control and surveillance is also a major problem that can be addressed at regional level though improved cooperation between coastal states, information sharing and joint control operations. Facilitation of regional trade and SPS issues are also important elements of regional programmes. In the period from 2007 to



2014, 13 initiatives have been funded at regional and sub-regional level.

The EU has a long tradition of cooperation with regional organisations in the Pacific Ocean. Under the 6<sup>th</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF), the EU has funded large-scale tuna tagging programmes that have been used by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) to develop tuna stock assessments and scientific advice to the West and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). During the period 2007–2015, the Development of Tuna Fisheries in the Pacific ACP Countries (**DEVFISH II**) (€8.7 million) and Science for Coastal and Ocean Fisheries (**SCICOFISH**) (€9.5 million) programmes have further supported the sustainable use of coastal and oceanic fisheries resources in the Pacific region.

In the Indian Ocean, the **SmartFish** programme<sup>8</sup> (€21 million for Phase 1 and €16 million for Phase 2) benefits the 20 eligible countries members of Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC). SmartFish is coordinated by the IOC, in cooperation with the FAO. Priorities for Phase 2 are 1) sustainable stock management, 2) improved national and regional fisheries governance, 3) effective monitoring, control and surveillance, 4) support to value chains and trade and 5) food security and food safety.

### National and local

During the period 2007–2014, the EU has funded 33 initiatives at national level (including local projects), representing a total of some €99 million. Only a few countries, including Mozambique, Cambodia and Yemen, have chosen fisheries or aquaculture as focal sectors for bilateral cooperation with the EU, although several trade, private sector and SPS projects include activities in the fisheries and aquaculture sector. These programmes support national fisheries and aquaculture policies and/or specific value chains. Most national and local projects are implemented by professional organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society organisation (CSOs) in cooperation with local communities, and have a strong pro-poor and livelihood focus.

### Geographical distribution of support

Overall, Africa is the main recipient of EU funds for fisheries and aquaculture, receiving half of the budget for the period 2007–2014. With €28 million, Asia is the second area of intervention, followed by the Pacific Region with €18 million.

Photo: EC Library

## Increasing fish production and incomes of indigenous people in Bangladesh

*'The project helped me to construct a pond. In 2008, I harvested 170 kg carpfish worth €174, doubling the income of my family. To be able to eat a proper meal every day is the most important achievement of my fish farming for my family.'* (Shulekha Hajong, Durgapur, Mymensingh)

This €1.12 million programme supports fish production, improves nutrition and provides income and alternative employment for vulnerable *Adivasi* people in Bangladesh.

**Partners** Worldfish Centre, Caritas and the Bangladesh Fisheries Research forum

**Duration** 2007–2009



# Coordination mechanisms

## Policy coherence for development

As a major global fisheries player and importer of fisheries products, the EU has a role to play for ensuring long-term sustainability of fisheries worldwide. The Commission works in close cooperation to ensure policy coherence for development and maximise synergies between policies to facilitate the achievement of the EU development objectives.

The EU **Common Fisheries Policy** (CFP) sets out the rules for the management of fisheries by the EU member states. A wide ranging reform of the CFP was agreed in 2013. The *Communication* on 'The external dimension of the CFP'<sup>9</sup> sets out the main strands for external action in line with the EU internal policy objectives, in particular the need to create a new generation of Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs), to make Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) more effective and to fight IUU fishing. The new CFP regulation enshrines the principle of policy coherence with other EU policies, and notably the development policy, to make sure that aspirations of developing countries are fully respected and to deploy the tools that allow developing countries to become actors for responsible and equitable fisheries, domestically and in RFMOs.

The EU also addresses fisheries through its **trade policy**, and in particular the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) that it concludes with ACP countries where fisheries play an important role. The EPAs contain chapters on fisheries with the objectives of promoting responsible fishing, a more solid fisheries policy and the agreement to work together against illegal fishing through improved monitoring. Provisions on cooperation for promoting joint ventures and enhancing production capacity and competitiveness are also part of those chapters.

## Donor coordination

The EU works in close coordination with other development partners and international organisations, such as the World Bank, FAO and the Worldfish Centre. Since 1985, the **European Fisheries Development Advisers Network (EFDAN)** has brought together the Commission services and European agencies working in fisheries development cooperation. This informal network facilitates exchange of information and coordination of interventions.

*Prawn fishermen  
in Mozambique.  
Photo: F. Lefèbvre*

## Millennium Development Goal 1c initiative in Mozambique: accelerating the reduction in hunger

The programme aims at improving food security, by addressing constraints faced by farmers and fishermen in an integrated way, improving production and market expansion.

Out of a total of €67.3 million, €14.7 million is dedicated to support development of aquaculture (Pro-Aqua) and artisanal fisheries (Pro-Pesca). The project also aims at improving the nutritional status of vulnerable groups. Pro-Pesca co-finances a large number of activities

that are implemented in 11 growth poles in 13 districts along the coast (Sofala and Zambezia provinces).

### Partners

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), National government

### Duration

2012–2017







# Perspectives

*Pulling the net at  
Palolem Beach*  
Photo: NewGoall

The EU is playing an active role in the discussion on the UN post-2015 agenda on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In its *Communication 'A decent Life for all: from vision to collective action'*<sup>10</sup>, the Commission highlighted the potential contribution of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture to several targets and priority areas such as 'food security and nutrition', 'oceans and seas' and 'biodiversity', pointing at inter-linkages between goals and targets and the need to ensure an integrated framework. While discussions on SDGs are not yet finalised, specific indicators on ocean and fisheries are likely to be adopted, pushing for improved Ocean Governance.

In the framework of its 2014-2020 programming, the EU has confirmed its commitment to sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, both under the Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC) priorities and in the framework of regional and national programming. Considering the large range of challenges affecting fisheries and aquaculture, a cross-sectoral approach should be promoted encompassing, among other

sectors, environment, climate, land governance, trade, labour and gender policies.

While the promotion of sustainable marine fisheries will continue to be a priority, recent discussions with developing countries have demonstrated a growing interest in favour of inland fisheries and aquaculture projects. Challenges and externalities linked to the development of aquaculture should be properly addressed including through due consideration to the integrity of ecosystems, development of low trophic aquaculture and promotion of herbivore species, reduction of the use of wild-caught juveniles, domestication and genetic improvement of local species, integration in agroecological models of production, specific support to small scale producers etc.

In line with the recent *Communication 'Stronger role of the private sector in achieving inclusive and sustainable growth in developing countries'*<sup>11</sup>, efforts should be made to better integrate private sector development objectives in support to sustainable fisheries and aquaculture.






*Pirogues, Nouakchott-beach, Mauritania*  
Photo: EC Library

# Endnotes

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Published by Directorate-General International Cooperation and Development,  
Directorate Sustainable Growth and Development, May 2015.

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Catalogue number: MN-02-15-498-EN-C

ISBN 978-92-79-49000-2



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DOI:10.2841/718838